THE FOURTH DAY.

29th February 1912.

The Assembly met at 11 A. M. on Thursday the 29th February.

The consideration of the subjects was resumed.

Mr. M. Sivathanu Pillai continued and said that the report of the Irrigation Committee did not contain the opinions of the members who were representatives of the people, that their opinions were not given weight and that the people most concerned were not informed of the report. The Member also pointed out that the delay of 30 days required for the water to reach Agastiswaram from the Reservoir had not been taken into account in fixing the date for opening the channels.

Dewan.—The Committee did not agree on a joint report. The minutes of the conference were recorded, and the opinions of the several members as given therein, were sent up by the President to the Government with a covering letter. The Member is apparently under the impression that some report was made by other people and he had no access to the same. His opinion also is there. He can have a copy of the Proceedings of the Government on the subject.

The Member continued and said that the report was prepared secretly in consultation with the officers of the P. W. Department. The Member further said that the present arrangement for opening and closing the channels was opposed to the Government Proceedings No. 2845, dated 6th April 1908, which said that water would flow in the channel for 10 months. The Member also referred to the fact that many garden lands had been converted into paddy fields since the opening of the channels and that it was hard that the ryots should be forced to resort to a 60 days' crop for want of water and thus be losers. The Member prayed (1) that the channels be opened on the 15th Medom and closed on the 30th Makarom, at least tentatively for a year, (2) that the work of opening and closing the channels be entrusted to a Board consisting of the officers of the Revenue Department, Agricultural Department and the people, (3) that the ryots of the place should be entrusted with the work of distributing the water in the tanks, (4) that a weekly list of the quantity of

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SUBJECTS.

water in the Pechipara Reservoir should be published, so that the people might be enabled to ascertain whether there would be sufficient water for cultivation, (5) that at the end of Thulam the major tanks might be filled with water, arrangements being made for using the same at the proper time, and (6) that the sale of tank beds should be stopped.

The Member then presented a memorial on the subject, signed by about a thousand people, for the consideration of the Government.

The Kodayar channels should be opened on the 15th Medom of each year for the supply of water for lands in Nanjinad.

Mr. K. A. Aiyamperumal Pillai (Member, Tovala taluk) supported the views of the previous speaker on the subject.

The Kodayar channels should be opened on the 15th Medom of each year, and the distribution of water should be under the control of the Revenue authorities.

Mr. A. M. Kumara Pillai, B. A., B. L. (Member, T. I. C. Nagercoil) said that the distribution and regulation of water from the Kodayar channels should be in conformity with the existing system of cultivation in South Travancore and the period required for the growth of the crops. The two crops, Kanni and Kumbhom, took 300 days, and unless the cultivation was begun in Medam, the two harvests could not be finished by Makaram when the channels were closed. To begin cultivation, water was required. Before the completion of the project, there were only 15,000 acres under cultivation; but the area had since gone up to 45,000 acres. Most of the tanks which supplied water were sold, and in the few major tanks which remained, there was absolutely no water in Medom, as the Irrigation authorities took great care to drain off the water in the tanks when the channels were closed. The result was that one of the crops had to be given up if there was no rain and if Pechipara water was not given for starting cultivation in Medom.

The Member further said that *thozhi* cultivation required a greater number of days than *podi* and that without water neither *podi* nor *thozhi* could be carried on in Medom and that water from the channels was required only if there was no rain in Medom.

Dewan.—When did you begin cultivation last time?

The Member replied that the cultivation was started with Pechipara water about the 4th of June, with the result that much damage was caused, as the rains set in as soon as the cultivation was started. The total loss was estimated to be 13 and odd lacs of Rupees. This had materially affected the Kumbhom crop. The Member also pointed out that, by using seed which could be harvested in a short time, the yield was found to be miserable and that water was required in Medom for the cultivation of the seed used at present.

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